

Message Text

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FOR THE SECRETARY ONLY FROM AMB JOVA

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: OVIP, MX

SUBJECT: PRESIDENT-ELECT LOPEZ PORTILLO'S DESIRE TO CALL ON GOVERNOR
CARTER

1. DURING BREAKFAST CONVERSATION WITH PRESIDENT-ELECT LOPEZ PORTILLO, HE ASKED ME TO COMMUNICATE PRIVATELY WITH YOU REGARDING ONE DELICATE ASPECT OF HIS TRIP--HIS HOPE TO HAVE SOME CONTACT WITH GOVERNOR CARTER. JLP STRESSED THAT HE WAS FIRST OF ALL PRESIDENT FORD'S GUEST DURING THIS TRIP AND WOULD NOT WISH TO CREATE A SERIOUS PROBLEM FOR THE PRESIDENT. HOWEVER, ONE OF HIS MOTIVES WAS TO LEARN AS MUCH AS POSSIBLE ABOUT THE UNITED STATES AND THUS HE COULD NOT HELP BEING EAGER TO KNOW SOMETHING OF "THIS NEW POLITICAL PHENOMENON, WHO IS CARTER", WHO HAD RISEN SO RAPIDLY ON THE POLITICAL SCENE AND WHO WAS PRACTICALLY UNKNOWN IN MEXICO AS CONTRASTED WITH THE WELL-DEFINED AND HIGHLY RESPECTED PERSONALITY OF PRESIDENT FORD.

2. LOPEZ PORTILLO POINTED OUT HIS PREDECESSORS AS PRESIDENT-ELECT HAD SCHEDULED THEIR VISITS TO WASHINGTON FOR MID-NOVEMBER PRECISELY IN ORDER TO AVOID BECOMING, HOWEVER INADVERTENTLY, INVOLVED IN THE ONGOING U.S. PRESIDENTIAL OR CONGRESSIONAL POLITICAL
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CAMPAIGNS. HE HAD DISREGARDED PRECEDENTS AND THE

COUNSEL OF HIS ADVISERS IN HIS EAGERNESS TO MAKE THE U.S. TRIP AS EARLY AS POSSIBLE, IN VIEW OF THE IMPORTANCE HE ATTACHED TO ESTABLISHING CONTACTS IN WASHINGTON. SHOULD IT THUS PROVE APPROPRIATE FOR HIM TO SEE GOVERNOR CARTER, THIS WOULD AVOID POSSIBLE CRITICISM HERE IN ADDITION TO GIVING HIM AN INSIGHT INTO THE THOUGHTS OF THE OTHER PRINCIPAL CONTENDERS FOR THE U.S. PRESIDENCY.

3. LOPEZ PORTILLO RECALLED THAT ARRANGEMENTS HAD BEEN MADE BY PRESIDENT ECHEVERRIA FOR YOU AS WELL AS FOR OTHER IMPORTANT U.S. OFFICIALS TO CALL ON JLP AS CANDIDATE AND FOR THIS REASON AS THE GUEST OF PRES. FORD, HE WOULD FEEL MORE COMFORTABLE IF ARRANGEMENTS FOR ANY CONTACT WITH GOVERNOR CARTER WERE TO BE MADE BY THE WHITE HOUSE STAFF OR BY THE STATE DEPARTMENT. AS AN ALTERNATIVE, HE COULD MAKE SUCH ARRANGEMENTS THROUGH THE MEXICAN EMBASSY OR OTHER PRIVATE CHANNELS; BUT, REGARDLESS OF THE CHANNEL UTILIZED, HE DID NOT WISH TO TAKE ANY ACTION ON THIS MATTER IF IT WOULD CAUSE ANY EMBARRASSMENT TO PRESIDENT FORD WHILE HE WAS IN EFFECT HIS GUEST.

4. JLP PLANS, INCIDENTALLY, TO VISIT NEW YORK, CHICAGO AND PERHAPS OTHER CITIES TO CONFER WITH BUSINESS, BANKING AND ACADEMIC LEADERS AND SUGGESTED THAT ATLANTA COULD BE INCLUDED IN SUCH PLANS IF A CARTER VISIT WERE ACCEPTABLE.
JOVA

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